

IF I HAD A HAMMER



ELDER KEITH JOEL WALKER

IF I HAD A HAMMER

The Power of Transformation

Written by
Elder Keith Joel Walker



INTRODUCTION

Beloved congregation, today we gather to explore a powerful metaphor: “If I had a hammer.” This phrase evokes images of construction, destruction, and transformation. It challenges us to consider what tools we have—and what tools we need—to create change in ourselves and our world.

As we delve into this theme, we’ll draw on scripture, tales, and illustrations that highlight the significance of our metaphorical hammers. Let us reflect on how we can break down the walls of sin, build bridges of love, and construct lives that reflect the glory of God.

I. The Hammer of Awareness

Scripture Reference: Psalm 139:23-24 *“Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts.”*

Illustration: The Old Country Boy and His Hammer

In a small country town, there lived an old country boy who was known for his craftsmanship. He had a trusty hammer that he used to build everything from fences to furniture. One day, he decided to build a bridge over a stream that had separated two communities for years. As he worked, he realized that the first step was to assess the land. He had to be aware of the obstacles and challenges before he could build something strong and lasting.

Just like that old country boy, we must take time for self-examination. We need to ask God to shine a light on our hearts, revealing the sins and struggles we may be unaware of. With the hammer of awareness, we can begin to break free from the chains that bind us.

II. The Hammer of Repentance

Scripture Reference: Acts 3:19 *“Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out.”*

Illustration: The Hammer Strikes the Nail

Imagine a skilled carpenter striking a nail with precision. Each swing of the hammer drives the nail deeper, securing the structure. Repentance is that decisive action that drives our commitment to change. It requires courage to confront our shortcomings and to turn away from the paths that lead us away from God.

The old country boy knew that if he wanted to build a strong bridge, he had to remove any rotten wood and replace it with solid beams. Similarly, we must remove the sin from our lives to allow God’s grace to fill our hearts.

III. The Hammer of Forgiveness

Scripture Reference: Matthew 6:14-15 *“For if you forgive other people when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you.”*

Illustration: The Forgiving Carpenter

There was once a carpenter who had a reputation for building the strongest homes. One day, a neighbor borrowed his tools and returned them damaged. Instead of reacting with anger, the carpenter chose to forgive. He understood that holding onto resentment would only weigh him down, just like a heavy hammer that could not be lifted.

Forgiveness is a powerful tool. It allows us to break the cycle of hurt and resentment, freeing ourselves to build relationships based on love and understanding.

IV. The Hammer of Action

Scripture Reference: James 2:17 *“Faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead.”*

Illustration: Building the Bridge

After the old country boy built his bridge, he didn't just stand back and admire his work; he invited the two communities to come together on that bridge. He understood that faith without action is like a hammer without a nail—it serves no purpose.

We are called to take action in our faith. What injustices around us need addressing? How can we serve our neighbors? The hammer of action compels us to engage with our communities and be the hands and feet of Christ.

V. The Hammer and the Nail: A Sure Foundation

Scripture Reference: Jeremiah 23:29 *“Is not my word like fire, declares the Lord, and like a hammer that breaks a rock in pieces?”* Isaiah 22:23 *“And I will fasten him like a peg in a secure place, and he will become a throne of honor to his father’s house.”*

Illustration: The Sure Nail

In the same way that a hammer drives a nail into a sturdy beam, God’s Word anchors our lives. The old country boy understood that without a secure foundation, his bridge would collapse. He always used the strongest nails he could find, ensuring that his work would last.

When we hammer out sin and build our lives on the foundation of God’s Word, we secure ourselves to the unshakeable promises of God.

VI. The Hammer of Apostolic Pentecost: Acts 2:38

Scripture Reference: Acts 2:38 *“Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.”*

Peter stood boldly on the day of Pentecost, hammer in hand, ready to deliver the first salvation message. With the authority given to him by the Holy Spirit, he proclaimed what must be done to be saved. This was not just a

suggestion; it was a divine command.



1. Repentance: This is the first strike of the hammer. It signifies a complete change of heart and mind. We must turn away from sin and turn towards God.

2. Baptism: The second strike drives home the necessity of being baptized

in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. This act symbolizes the washing away of our sins and our identification with Christ's death, burial, and resurrection.

3. Receiving the Holy Spirit: The final outcome of this divine process is the gift of the Holy Spirit, evidenced by speaking in tongues. This is the new birth, the transformation that empowers us to live a holy life.

VII. The New Birth: John 3:3-8

Scripture Reference: John 3:3-8 *“Jesus replied, ‘Very truly I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God unless they are born again.’ ‘How can someone be born when they are old?’ Nicodemus asked. ‘Surely they cannot enter a second time into their mother’s womb to be born!’ Jesus answered, ‘Very truly I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless*

they are born of water and the Spirit.”

In these verses, Jesus emphasizes the necessity of being born of water and spirit to enter the Kingdom of God. This is a clear message: we must experience both the baptism of water and the baptism of the Holy Spirit to attain eternal life.

Illustration: The Hammer of New Birth

Consider how a blacksmith shapes a piece of metal through intense heat and pressure. The process is transformative, turning raw material into a strong tool. Similarly, being born of the water and Spirit is a transformative experience that prepares us for a life in the Kingdom.

VIII. Men of the Bible Who Took Up the Hammer

1. Noah: He built the ark, a vessel of salvation, as a hammer against the impending flood. His faith and obedience became a stronghold for his family.

2. Nehemiah: With a hammer in one hand and a sword in the other, he rebuilt the walls of Jerusalem, demonstrating both physical and spiritual fortitude.

3. Moses: He was called to lead the Israelites out of Egypt, using the authority given to him by God as a hammer to break the chains of slavery.

4. David: He wielded a hammer in a metaphorical sense when he faced Goliath. His faith was the tool that brought down the giant, establishing him as a king.

5. Paul: He preached the Gospel with fervor, hammering out the truth of Christ in the hearts of many, establishing churches and communities of faith.

6. Peter: On the day of Pentecost, Peter stood up with the eleven, hammer in hand, boldly proclaiming the Gospel and declaring what must be done to be saved. He laid the foundation for Apostolic doctrine.

7. Ezra: He took up the hammer of the Word, leading the people back to the truth of God's law after their return from exile, restoring worship and community.

IX. The Hammer of Holiness: Living Separately

Scripture Reference: 2 Corinthians 6:17 *"Therefore, come out from them and be separate, says the Lord; touch no unclean thing, and I will receive you."*

In the Apostolic Pentecostal movement, the call to holiness is not merely a suggestion; it is a command from God. If I had a hammer, I would use it to break down the barriers of worldly influence that seek to creep into our lives.

Illustration: The Hammer of Separation

Imagine a gardener using a hammer to break up the hard ground, preparing it for planting. In the same way, we must break up the hard soil of our hearts to allow God's Word to take root. Separation from the world allows us to cultivate a garden of holiness, where God can grow and flourish in our lives.

X. Building the Kingdom

Conclusion: As we reflect on these powerful metaphors, let us remember that we are called to be builders of God's Kingdom. Let us embrace the hammer of awareness, wield the hammer of repentance, extend the hammer of forgiveness, and take up the hammer of action.

May we also remember the importance of the sure nail, fastening our lives to the unshakeable foundation of God's Word. Together, we can build a kingdom of love, grace, and transformation.

Let us be inspired by the old country boy and his hammer, knowing that with God's help, we can construct a life that reflects His glory. If I had a microphone today, I would proclaim the truth of Acts 2:38, emphasizing the need for holiness within and without, and the importance of separation from the world. Let us hammer these truths into our hearts and lives.

If I had a hammer in my hand, I would use it to build the

church, to hammer out the truth of the Gospel, and to create a community that reflects the love and holiness of Jesus Christ. Amen.

Written by Elder Keith Joel Walker

Read and Obey Acts 2:38

